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Letter dated 7 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

During the last 24 hours, there has been a drastic and dangerous deterioration in the already sensitive and tense situation in the Middle East, this time at the border between Israel and Lebanon. Acts of aggression perpetrated against Israel from Lebanese territory during this period have created a grave and serious threat to international peace and security in the region.

On Saturday morning, 7 October 2000, an armed and frenzied mob, numbering in the hundreds, attacked the border fence from Lebanese territory, immediately followed by heavy shelling of Israeli border positions by Hizballah terrorist elements from Lebanese territory, using explosives, rocket-propelled grenades, Sager missiles and border shells. During the course of this aggression, three Israeli soldiers were kidnapped by a Hizballah unit which had entered Israeli territory for this purpose. These Israelis are being held hostage by Hizballah inside Lebanon. Acts of aggression against Israel have continued throughout the day.

Israel views this act of aggression with the utmost gravity and as a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations, fundamental principles of international law and Security Council resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, pursuant to which Israel withdrew its forces from Lebanese territory.

Since its withdrawal from Lebanese territory, Israel has repeatedly called upon the Government of Lebanon to fulfil its obligations under international law, and as demanded in resolution 425 (1978), to restore, with the assistance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), its effective control over South Lebanon and ensure that international peace and security are maintained on its side of the border. Despite these pleas, the Government of Lebanon has failed for months to restrain, and has even encouraged, provocative and violent cross-border attacks against Israel. Continued diplomatic attempts, on the part of Israel, to warn that the situation on the northern border could deteriorate have gone unheeded. In this regard, I should like to recall the letters dated 6 July (S/2000/661), 13 July (S/2000/689), 4 August (S/2000/769) and 15 August 2000 (S/2000/805), in which Israel brought to the attention of the Secretary-General the continued wave of Lebanese violations along the border, and the potential that those acts might destabilize the border area and imperil the maintenance of international peace and security.

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Israel holds the Governments of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic fully and directly responsible for the acts of aggression described above. Israel calls on the Security Council to act urgently in accordance with its primary responsibility for international peace and security to secure the immediate and safe return of the Israeli hostages and the cessation of all aggressive activity from Lebanese territory against Israel.

I wish to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations